AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-10. (cancelled)

11. (new) Method for treating a product, which contains cellular material of eukaryotic or prokaryotic origin, which comprises:

bringing the product in a treatment device comprising two electrodes connected to an electronic circuit;

creating an electrical field pulse in said product;

wherein a rise time or leading edge of each imposed voltage pulse is shorter than an associated electronic relaxation time of the product under treatment;

said electronic relaxation time being defined by the ratio of electrical conductivity and permittivity of the product.

12. (new) The method according to claim 11, wherein cellular structures present in the product are pathogenic or spoilage organisms, or spores, and treatment is applied as a mild preservation method to prevent the outgrowth of such organisms in the product after production during distribution or storage.

13. (new) The method according to claim 12, wherein the cellular structures have membranes, and the product contains

target compounds selected from the group consisting of minerals, enzymes and molecular compounds which are exchanged at a higher rate through the membranes of the cellular structures when applying the treatment.

14. (new) The method according to claim 11, wherein each electrical field pulse has a duration shorter than the relaxation time of the product.

15. (new) The method according to claim 11, wherein the dependent on the type of product and target organisms contained in the product, the maximum field strength during a cycle, the repetition frequency and the number of cycles during a treatment are selected such that the target organisms are functionally affected or inactivated leading to a microbiologically safe product having a stable shelf life.

16. (new) The method according to claim 11, wherein dependent on the type of product and target cells contained in the product, the maximum field strength reached in a cycle, the repetition frequency and the number of cycles during a treatment are selected such that the target cells are functionally affected, not necessarily inactivated, leading to an enhanced exchange of intracellular compounds with the product.

17. (new) The method according to claim 11, wherein the maximum field strength in the product during each pulse, the repetition frequency, the number of cycles and the total

residence time of the treatment are selected such that the temperature of the product does not exceed a predetermined value during treatment.